

Cultural Diplomacy in Arizona in the Wake of SB 1070

La Ley SB 1070 y la promoción de la cultura mexicana en Arizona

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Abstract:

The coming into force of SB 1070 in Arizona made the Mexican community wary of expressing its cultural identity out of fear of migratory action by local authorities. The law also affected family dynamics and community relations. Nine years later, the promotion of Mexican culture by Mexican consulates in Arizona has proven an effective means of reweaving the fabric of society and vindicating the value of the contributions the Mexican community makes to the state of Arizona.



Resumen:

Cuando la Ley SB 1070 entró en vigor en Arizona, la comunidad mexicana enfrentó una amenaza directa de parte de las autoridades que puso en jaque la expresión de su identidad cultural, la cotidianidad al interior de la composición familiar y la forma de relacionarse con sus comunidades. Nueve años después, la promoción de la cultura mexicana es una herramienta de gran valor para rehabilitar el tejido social de la comunidad y para reivindicar el valor de las aportaciones de los mexicanos al estado de Arizona.



Key Words:

Cultural diplomacy, Arizona, promotion, Mexican identity, community.



Palabras clave:

Diplomacia cultural, Arizona, promoción, identidad, comunidad.

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Testimonials like the following:

Before 2010, when my mom would get into the car to go to work, she would hang her rosary beads on the rearview mirror because it made her feel safe. When SB 1070 came into force, she stopped doing it. We had to sacrifice part of our identity out of fear

are common among the vast majority of families of Mexican and Latino origin in Arizona. The coming into force of SB 1070 not only paved the way and limits for state political and migratory legislation, but invaded the private lives of families in what could only be described as a direct assault on the ways in which the state's Mexican community expressed its identity, undermining practically any chance of a constructive dialogue with American society in general.

Nine years down the line, the impact of this highly controversial law on the Mexican community remains tangible and some sectors of society are still wary of expressing their cultural identity. This raises the question of what Mexican consulates can do by way of cultural promotion to turn the situation around. The presence of Consulates of Mexico in Arizona is an opportunity to strengthen ties of shared identity with the community, but for these efforts to be effective, we need to be creative with available resources and strategic when it comes to identifying local partners.

SB 1070: Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act

On April 23, 2010, Arizona Governor Janice Brewer approved SB 1070, one of the most controversial pieces of U.S. anti-immigration legislation of recent decades. The media had a heyday, with dailies like *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *El País* and *Le Monde* giving wide coverage to the events that transpired in the state. Among other clauses, the law stated that the authorities need have only “reasonable suspicion” to request papers proving the legal status of detainees. In other words, state authorities would have the power to carry out migratory functions based on subjective racial profiling that did not discriminate between illegal immigrants and people with permanent residence or U.S. citizenship. The law was harshly criticized and rightly so, given that it violated the rights of a specific sector of society, whose members could be arbitrarily questioned by the authorities, regardless of their migratory status.

The state’s Mexican and Latino communities were immediately instilled with fear: in 2012, some 100,000 Latinos fled the state, many of them Mexican. The city of Phoenix, Arizona, came to have the second-highest deportation rate in the country, surpassed only by Los Angeles. Every day, 30 men and woman were deported,¹ while reports of excessive force against Latino families further fueled the community’s mistrust of the authorities. Some of the more unexpected effects of the new law were an increase in teenage marriages to obtain legal migratory status, absenteeism and poor academic performance due to resentment toward the local authorities and school districts, and budget cuts at schools with a high percentage of drop outs.²

Entire cities, school districts, universities, opinion leaders and prominent members of the business communities in both the United States and Mexico called for a boycott on political dialogue, trade and academic relations

¹ Ed Pilkington, “Arizona Anti-immigration Law Already Felt in State’s Hispanic Communities”, *The Guardian*, April 24, 2012, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/24/arizona-immigration-law-hispanic-communities> (consulted on: June 30, 2019).

² For more information on the effects of SB 1070 on teenagers, see Tomás López, “Left Back: The Impact of SB 1070 on Arizona’s Youth”, Tucson, University of Arizona, September 2011, at https://law.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/Left_Back%20Report.pdf (consulted on: September 1, 2019).

with Arizona and institutions that continued to operate in the state.³ According to the Center for American Progress, in the tourism sector alone, the conventions and conferences segment had reported estimated losses of US\$217 million and 4,236 jobs by year-end 2010.⁴ On July 28, 2010—24 hours before SB 1070 came into force—, federal judge Susan Bolton ordered the suspension of some of its more radical clauses,⁵ in what was to be the first in a series of lengthy legal actions to partially overturn a law that would continue to violate the rights of the Mexican community in the state of Arizona.

The Mexican Community Returns to its Roots: Activism and Cultural Expressions

Latino Activism and the Political and Electoral Consequences of SB 1070

The new legislation instilled fear in immigrants, but it also had some unforeseen consequences. On April 22, 2010—one day before Governor Brewer signed it into law—, hundreds of Phoenix high school students took to the streets to protest against SB 1070.⁶ The bill and its discriminatory nature—which made no distinction between citizens, legal residents

³ “Who is Boycotting Arizona?”, in Arizona Central, August 27, 2010, at <http://archive.azcentral.com/business/articles/2010/05/13/20100513immigration-boycotts-list.html> (consulted on: August 30, 2019).

⁴ Marshall Fitz, Angela Kelley, *Stop the Conference The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Conference Cancellations Due to Arizona’s S.B. 1070*, Washington, D.C., Center for American Progress, November 2010, 1, at https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/11/pdf/az_tourism.pdf (consulted on: September 1, 2019).

⁵ Antonio Caño, “Un juzgado de EE UU suspende los artículos más polémicos de la ley de Arizona,” *El País*, July 28, 2010, available at https://elpais.com/elpais/2010/07/28/actualidad/1280305047_850215.html (consulted on: October 16, 2019).

⁶ Osej Serratos, “Generation SB 1070: These Latino Millennials Grew up Under Controversial Immigration Law,” in NBC News, November 17, 2017, at <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/generation-sb1070-these-latino-millennials-grew-under-controversial-immigration-law-n821806> (consulted on: June 30, 2019).

and undocumented immigrants—marked a tipping point that was to lead civil society to organize itself into groups. Activism intensified and the Latino community became more involved in politics, especially young people. According to Abril Gallardo from the civil society organization Living United for Change in Arizona (LUCHA), the law “helped many of us to come out of the shadows; it pushed us to take action”.⁷

The passing of such a controversial law turned out to be poor political capital for its architects and voters immediately took reprisals. In an unprecedented political maneuver, Senator Russell Pearce, the main sponsor of SB 1070, was ousted at a recall election in November 2011, making him the first legislator in Arizona to be removed from office in this way.⁸ In terms of electoral turnout, in less than a decade, the percentage of Latino voters rose from 300,000 in 2008 to 500,000 in 2016.⁹ In Arizona, 65% of Latino voters said they had registered to vote at the suggestion of family or friends and the three issues that most influenced their decision to vote for a particular candidate were their views on public health, employment and migratory issues.¹⁰ Some activists believe the positive outcome of the 2018 mid-term elections was the fruit of disciplined efforts to encourage people to register to vote that began in 2010 and that have managed to reach populations outside urban corridors. In 2018, many of the children and young people who witnessed at firsthand the arbitrariness of SB 1070 and its negative impact on their families were able to exercise their right to vote.¹¹

⁷ O. Serratos, *op. cit.*

⁸ Amanda J. Crawford, “Arizona Immigration-Law Author Pearce Loses in Recall Election”, in Bloomberg, November 9, 2011, at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-11-09/arizona-senate-immigration-law-author-pearce-loses-in-recall-election> (consulted on: September 1, 2019).

⁹ O. Serratos, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ “The Latino Vote Project”, 2 and 5, at <https://americasvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Latino-Vote-Project-Report.pdf> (consulted on: August 27, 2019).

¹¹ Keerthi Vedantam, “Report: Latino Voters Flexed Muscle in 2018, Set to Be a Force in 2020”, in Cronkite News, April 25, 2019, at <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2019/04/25/report-latino-voters-flexed-muscle-in-2018-set-to-be-a-force-in-2020/> (consulted on: September 2, 2019).

Art as Activism: The “Calle 16” Movement

In many political movements in the Western world, art has proven effective at creating symbols that unify people around a cause. In the case of the Mexican-American community, the use of art as an expression of discontent goes all the way back to the Chicano movement of the 1960s.

SB 1070 turned out to be a strange, dark muse for Arizona’s artistic community. The very same day its signing was announced, the artist *Nomas*, armed with stencils, aerosol paint and a generous supply of creativity, intervened the walls, lampposts and fences of downtown Phoenix with the likenesses of Sheriff Joe Arpaio, decked out in military garb and accompanied with Nazi swastikas and the slogan “SB 1070”. In interview with the *Phoenix New Times*, Nomas said his intervention was the result of great shock and anger: “I had to voice my outrage. It wasn’t a choice”.¹²

More voices gradually joined the chorus of protesters overcome with a sense of impotence: local artists created posters that quickly became icons of the anti-Arpaio, anti-SB 1070 and pro-migrant movement. Artists like Ernesto Yerena, Favianna Rodríguez (see image 1), Jesús Barraza (see image 2), Roberto Lovato, Gan Golan and Diane Ovalle did more than create iconic images that were used in protests against the law; they went one step further and included members of the local community in the artistic process, familiarizing them with the technologies they needed to create their own images. The local art of Arizona quickly garnered the interest of news networks and national dailies, and became a point of reference for similar causes in other American states.

The use of art to create symbolic images like these plays a vital role in the creation of a collective memory that makes its mark on future generations and this is something the artists of Arizona are well aware of. According to Sylvia Gorodezky, the Latino community prefers poster art because it is a highly effective vehicle for dissemination:

¹² Claire Lawton, “SB 1070 Has Been Bad for Arizona and Worse for Mexicans, but It Inspired a Year’s Worth of Great Art”, *Phoenix New Times*, April 21, 2011, at <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/sb-1070-has-been-bad-for-arizona-and-worse-for-mexicans-but-it-inspired-a-years-worth-of-great-art-6448260> (consulted on: September 2, 2019).

It is more economical in terms of space, labor and materials; [...] because it can be placed anywhere easily, whereas to see a mural, people have to go somewhere. [...] Poster art is for the public; it is a representative style and a sociopolitical document [...] that records a community's history and life. The poster is mass produced, has less physical presence and tends to disappear [...] it is a to-the-point message, generally with political content.¹³



Image 1. Favianna Rodríguez, Roberto Lovato, Gan Golart, “We Will not Comply”, June 26, 2010.

For collector and artist Marco Albarrán “this kind of reactionary work is an art form that sticks around, [...] Eventually, these images will give future generations something to really visualize instead of some book telling them what happened. Hopefully it will help them relate to the time and the peoples’ struggle”.¹⁴

Graphic design and the plastic arts were not the only disciplines to rise up in creative arms against SB 1070. The need to take a stance spilled over into theater, literature (especially poetry), music and, of course, gastronomy. Silvana Salcido, chef and owner of the iconic Mexican restaurant “Barrio Café”, says the passing of SB 1070 was a time of great uncertainty and indignation, but it was also a valuable opportunity to foster a sense of identity among the community. Along with artists like Zarco Guerrero and Lalo Cota, Silvana founded “Calle Diez y Seis Arte, Cultura & Gastronomía”, a cultural and gastronomic movement intended to give Mexican culture greater visi-

¹³ Sylvia Gorodezky, *Arte chicano como cultura de protesta*, México, UNAM, 1993, 82.

¹⁴ C. Lawton, *op. cit.*

bility in downtown Phoenix. “With the movement Calle 16—she says—, I’m not looking to make a little Mexico [understood as a closed-off zone exclusive to the community of Mexican origin]. I want a center of pride and culture that reflects who we are as Mexicans living in Arizona”.¹⁵ Chef Silvana’s cultural interpretations exalt and honor her Mexican roots, but when asked how authentic her food is, she insists her dishes are of Mexican origin like herself, but with a twist influenced by her identity as a U.S. citizen.

Contrary to the direction taken by the aforementioned graphic artists, the “Calle 16” movement—named after 16th Street, known to the inhabitants of Phoenix as a hub for Mexican food and culture—focused on the creation of murals and large-format art, based on the premise that “a mural creates community, and this is precisely what it needed”.¹⁶

“Consulate on Your Side”: The Promotion of Mexican Culture as a Consular Mission

Although SB 1070 has been partially revoked, some sections remain in force. Like Section 2(B)—popularly known as the “show me your papers” provision—, which authorizes law enforcement officers to detain individuals and check that they are not illegal immigrants on the grounds of nothing more than “reasonable suspicion”.¹⁷ The stress caused by SB 1070 lingers on in the psyches of the children, young people and adults who felt its effects, either directly or indirectly,¹⁸ effects that

¹⁵ Kathleen Furore, “Female Culinary Star: Chef Silvana Salcido Esparza”, in *El Restaurante*, January 29, 2019, at <https://elrestaurante.com/female-culinary-star-chef-silvana-salcido-esparza/> (consulted on: August 27, 2019).

¹⁶ C. Lawton, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ Billy Peard, “SB 1070 in 2018: What Are Our Rights?”, in *ACLU Arizona*, July 27, 2018, at <https://www.acluaz.org/en/news/sb-1070-2018-what-are-our-rights> (consulted on: August 31, 2019).

¹⁸ There are studies on the impact SB 1070 had on the academic performance of children and young people from families of Latino origin. For more information, see Richard Orozco and Francesca López, “Impacts of Arizona’s SB 1070 on Mexican American Students’ Stress, School Attachment, and Grades”, in *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, vol. 23, no. 42, April 13, 2015, in <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v23.1808> (consulted on: October 16, 2019).

are not limited to the individual's personal development, but that extend to changes in their family dynamic, the way in which they interact with their communities and their perception of the traits they identify with culturally.

As part of its strategy to address the impact of SB 1070 on the Mexican community in Arizona, the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE) allocated more resources, both financial and human, to its Protection Department, the Foreign Legal Assistance Program (PALE) and its network of legal counsels, and launched intensive campaigns to provide the community with up-to-date information. The presence of consular representatives at detention centers helped ensure the rights of people of Mexican origin in the state were protected, but almost a decade after the campaigns that advised families to keep a "low profile" when expressing their cultural identity, it is now time to ask how Mexican consulates can help restore the social and cultural fabric of the Mexican community. According to Alberto Fierro Garza, the main purpose of Mexican cultural diplomacy is: "To promote the values the Mexican identity is built on, be these historic, cultural or artistic, by disseminating intellectual and creative works internationally. And in places where there are Mexican communities, offer them the chance to stay in touch with their country of origin by means of artistic expressions and products".¹⁹

In the aftermath of SB 1070, Mexican consulates in Arizona are now focused on coordinating functions "holistically, depicting the country as a

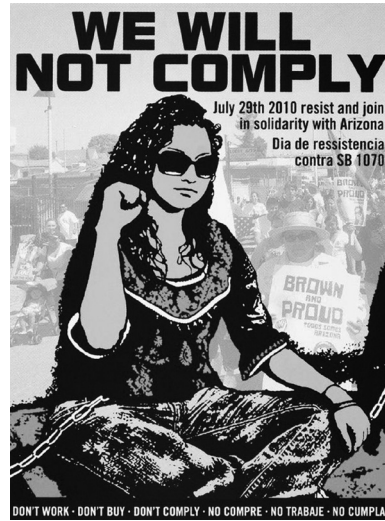


Imagen 2. Jesús Barraza, Diane Ovalle, "We Will not Comply" July, 2010.

¹⁹ Alberto Fierro Garza, "La diplomacia cultural como instrumento privilegiado de la política exterior", in *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, no. 85, November 2008-February 2009, 25, at <https://revistadigital.sre.gob.mx/images/stories/numeros/n85/introd.pdf> (consulted on: October 16, 2019).

whole, with emphasis on its progress and achievements, and backing up Mexico's importance to the economy and security of Americans with hard data",²⁰ to quote Ambassador Luz Elena Baños Rivas. In this regard, cultural diplomacy in the state of Arizona needs to be deployed strategically, with a view to highlighting the contribution and enormous influence Mexican culture has on the development of local cultural and artistic expressions.

Due to its proximity to Mexico and the nature of the state's Mexican community—many of whose members maintain strong ties to family back in Mexico and a clear-cut Mexican identity—, it is a very thin line that divides cultural promotion activities and initiatives intended to strengthen the identity of the Mexican community in the area. The same project needs to showcase the strengths, prestige and value of Mexican culture for the benefit of a population that has no family ties with Mexico, while simultaneously strengthening the identity of the Mexican community by encouraging it to reconnect with its ancestral roots. In this context, the Cultural Diplomacy Program drawn up by the government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador provides an almost natural complement and continuity to the cultural promotion efforts Mexico has undertaken in Arizona, namely the program's fifth pillar entitled "Our Migrants and Culture".²¹

Cultural promotion efforts should indubitably pay tribute to Mexico's ancestral past and the contribution of great Mexican artists to the fine arts, especially music and the plastic arts. This, however, is not enough. We need to innovate, show the world the full extent of Mexico's vast cultural heritage, the work of its young artists, especially in innovative sectors like digital art, and of institutions like the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Inegi), which has quantified the economic contribution of the arts, culture and entertainment industries to the country's GDP.²² Consulates also

²⁰ Luz Elena Baños Rivas, "Poder suave e imagen país en la era Trump. Desafíos y oportunidades para México", in *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, no. 111, September-December 2017, 44.

²¹ Enrique Márquez, *La diplomacia cultural de México 2018-2024, 7 propuestas para su fortalecimiento e innovación*, Mexico, SRE, 2019, available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ULsCTk1-AWLKVC7_C2IhemNgL5SvaES/view (consulted on: October 2, 2019).

²² For more information and figures on the contribution of the cultural industries to the Mexican economy, see Inegi, "Cultura, Base 2013. Principales resultados de la Cuenta Satélite de la Cultura de México", at <https://www.inegi.org.mx/temas/cultura/> (consulted on: August 30, 2019).

need to make strategic use of social media—namely platforms like Instagram—to attract second, third and fourth generation Mexican-Americans and other sectors of the community with whom they do not traditionally have very strong ties. Similarly, they have a role to play advising local institutions on celebrations related to Day of the Dead, Christmas and national festivities, to ensure these are authentic events that respect their origins.

*The Practice of Cultural Diplomacy
by Consulates: 2018-2024*

One of the first foreign policy actions President López Obrador's administration took was to acknowledge the importance of promoting Mexican culture abroad, this being understood as a comprehensive, innovative strategy, shored up by the seven main pillars of the 2018-2024 Cultural Diplomacy Program. As regards the strategy for consulates, these seven pillars can either be found in existing projects or offer interesting opportunities.

The first pillar, "Institutional Cultural Management: Housekeeping", addresses the need for a smart strategy for the allocation of resources and the forming of effective strategic partnerships. In Arizona, it is especially important consulates forge partnerships with new strategic actors and strengthen cultural cooperation ties with prestigious institutions in their constituencies. In the case of Mexico's General Consulate in Phoenix, approaching new actors has enabled it to explore projects for cooperation between its departments of Cultural Affairs and Protection and specialized organizations like Aliento, founded by the activist and "dreamer" Reyna Montoya. This association runs cultural programs so undocumented children and young people who are either DACA beneficiaries or who were born in the United States, but have one or more undocumented family member, can express their fears, stress and frustrations through art. Clearly, cultural promotion has enormous potential to complement protection work and can be an effective vehicle for rebuilding the fabric of society.

The year 2010 was one of reflection and an opportunity for Mexico's representations in Arizona to strengthen institutional ties with cultural organizations in the state. That year, the General Consulate in Phoenix celebrated the traditional Independence Day "Grito de Dolores" in the company of a

crowd of 25,000 and used the occasion to hand out guidebooks on SB 1070 and provide information on consular services.²³ That same year, Mexico's Bicentenary celebrations gave the country greater exposure, providing an excellent opportunity to dialogue with the city's major museums. The years to follow saw the intensive promotion of Mexican art, resulting in a permanent program of high-profile exhibitions. In 2012, the Musical Instrument Museum (MIM) hosted *The Day of the Dead: A Celebration of Life through Music* just two years after it was founded,²⁴ while the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA) showed *Santiago Borja: Everything Falls into Place When It Collapses* on October 2016-January 2017 and *Double Agents: Carla Fernández and Pedro Reyes* on October 2018-February 2019. Showing at the Heard Museum on April-September 2017 was *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera* from the Gellman Collection and at the Phoenix Art Museum, *Teotihuacan: City of Water, City of Fire* on October 2018-January 2019.²⁵ The staging of exhibitions like these is in line with the second pillar of the aforementioned Cultural Diplomacy Program: the importance of forging strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Diplomacy Council to diversify and strengthen alternatives in districts where there are large Mexican communities and where efforts are being made to disseminate a positive image of Mexico.

²³ Consmez, "Bicentenario en Phoenix," on Youtube, September 17, 2010, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffivL1aYgNul> (consulted on: October 2, 2019).

²⁴ Laura Hahnefeld, "Three Must-Visits in the Valley for Mexican Independence Day," *Phoenix New Times*, September 14, 2012, at <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/restaurants/three-must-visits-in-the-valley-for-mexican-independence-day-6505923> (consulted on: October 2, 2019).

²⁵ For more information on these exhibitions, see SMoCA, City of Scottsdale, *Scottsdale Annual Report: Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale Public Art*, Scottsdale, City of Scottsdale, 2017, [24], at https://scottsdalearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/16-17_SA_AnnualReport_LowResCompress_No-Page-Number.pdf (consulted on: October 11, 2019); "Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera," in Heard Museum, at <https://heard.org/exhibits/frida-kahlo-diego-rivera/> (consulted on: October 11, 2019); "Double Agents: Carla Fernández and Pedro Reyes," in SMoCA, at <https://smoca.org/exhibition/double-agents-carla-fernandez-and-pedro-reyes/> (consulted on: October 11, 2019); "Teotihuacan: City of Water, City of Fire," in Phoenix Art Museum, at <http://www.phxart.org/exhibition/teotihuacan> (consulted on: October 11, 2019).

The program's fourth pillar "A New Programming Path" addresses the strengthening of Mexico's international presence by appealing to shared identities, especially the use of the Spanish language. According to Richard Orozco and Francesca López from the University of Arizona, there are clear benefits to maintaining cultural ties through language.²⁶ However, bills like SB 1070 make Mexican families reluctant to speak Spanish in the home, out of fear their children will be the target of discrimination or that it will have a negative impact on their academic performance, reason why one essential task of consulates in Arizona will be to promote the use of Spanish. This needs to be approached from two angles. In the case of the Mexican community, it will require projects and programs that highlight the importance of teaching their children and young people Spanish. As Ludwig Wittgenstein says in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" and it is practically impossible to reconnect with Mexican culture without encouraging knowledge—albeit basic—of the Spanish language. And in the case of the Anglo-Saxon community, it will require campaigns that promote knowledge of the Spanish language and the advantages of being bilingual. With the support of the departments of Communities, Political Affairs, Economic Affairs and Protection, ties need to be forged with strategic partners and the message sent out that the ability to speak Spanish will always be a plus in the areas of trade and tourism, not to mention facilitating dialogue in political, educational and cultural spheres, not just with Mexico, but with the global Spanish-speaking community.

The absence of specialized centers like the Cervantes Institute in Arizona means cultural attachés and consulate heads will have to flex their creative muscle. One solution would be to form strategic partnerships with universities, public libraries and cultural centers for the teaching of the Spanish language. In addition to launching community literacy campaigns, the facilities of consulates and strategic partners could be used to host reading circles, book readings and presentations, while the use of new technologies and digital tools could be promoted as a means of helping people reconnect with the Spanish language. It is increasingly common

²⁶ R. Orozco and F. López, *op. cit.*, 17.

to see institutions like the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) team up to create quality contents—in this case via Canal Once—that can be consumed by audiences all over the world from the comfort of a computer screen or electronic device, without putting a strain on the family budget.

In this regard, 2010 saw the strengthening of dialogue with local cultural centers, but it also evidenced the need for Mexican cultural institutions operating locally. Consequently, in February 2015, the UNAM and the University of Arizona entered into an agreement for the founding of the UNAM-Tucson Center for Mexican Studies. The Center's goals include “strengthening academic cooperation with the University of Arizona (UA) and other higher education institutions in the region, deepening and broadening the scope of joint research projects in the natural and social sciences, engineering and the humanities [...], and disseminating Mexican culture and supporting the Mexican community in the region by offering educational and training services”.²⁷ The Center continues to operate and specializes in seminars and programs for the teaching of the Spanish language.

As part of their cultural promotion strategies, consulates need to familiarize the local population with the everyday customs and traditions of Mexico and invite local artists—first- and second-generation Mexicans—to participate in joint initiatives that encourage them to reconnect with their roots. The fifth pillar of the Cultural Diplomacy Program, “Our Migrants and Culture”, seeks to acknowledge and reappraise the cultural identities of communities of Mexican migrants in foreign countries and the mix of cultures that emerges with each new generation. As discussed previously, Arizona's artistic community of Mexican origin experienced a rebirth as the result of the culturally traumatic experience that was SB 1070. In this case, policies seen to be detrimental to the community led to a rise in political activism—particularly by those born in the United States and who felt they had a duty to speak for those whose voices could not be heard—, backed by collectives that have proven effective at getting exposure in both the English- and Spanish-speaking media. It is therefore essential we fos-

²⁷ UNAM-Tucson, “Quiénes somos”, at http://www.tucson.unam.mx/opciones.php?lan=0&id_op=2 (consulted on: October 2, 2019).

ter dialogue with the artistic community and acknowledge its members as actors that can help promote Mexican art in the United States. We also need to strengthen the role of consulates as agents of change by forging partnerships that guarantee access to their infrastructure—whether or not these have a Mexican Cultural Institute—and opening these spaces up to members of the Mexican community who are not necessarily familiar with the city’s cultural expressions. Viewing Mexican art created by local artists at their consulate is a holistic experience for members of the Mexican community, one that encourages them to take part in other cultural activities in their locality. For younger generations, the chance to interact with works of art that combine their local and family identities serves as inspiration and encourages them to develop an artistic sensibility and take an interest in culture-oriented careers.

Final Comments

After the passing of SB 4 in Texas—a bill very similar to Arizona’s SB 1070—the Jolt Texas collective staged a *quinceañeras* protest at the Texas state Capitol. According to its organizer Christina Tzintzun, “This celebration of culture is a call for action against SB 4 by showing the symbolization of young Latinas’ coming of age and recognizing their responsibility to their community”.²⁸ Following the terrible attack on the culture and values of Arizona’s Mexican community, other communities have learned from the experience and worked to defend their identity and use their cultural heritage as a means of protecting themselves and increasing their visibility.

Mexican families in Arizona and popular culture worldwide continue to suffer the repercussions of SB 1070.²⁹ Subsequently, it behooves Mexican

²⁸ Alejandra Martínez, “From Quinceañera to Protest: Tejana Teens Fight SB 4 Immigration Law”, in NPR/Latino USA, July 17, 2017, at <https://www.latinousa.org/2017/07/17/quincañera-protest-tejana-teens-fight-sb-4-immigration-law/> (consulted on: September 1, 2019).

²⁹ In June 2019, Manu Chao released “Bloody Border”, a song that refers to the situation of migrants on the Mexico-U.S. border and Arizona’s anti-immigration legislation.

consulates to vindicate the contribution of immigrants and Mexican-American citizens to their neighborhoods and the country in general. In the area of culture, we urgently need to inform the community that the state's main universities, museums and cultural centers have a curator, senior member, advisor or director of Mexican origin capable of capitalizing on positive international press and fostering more constructive conversations on the Mexican community and Mexican art in Arizona.

Mexico's new administration has established certain guidelines for cultural promotion by consulates, but exploiting opportunities to the full will require cultural attachés with vision and creativity, and committed consulate heads who view cultural diplomacy as a means of broaching sensitive issues and reaching out to the most vulnerable sectors of the Mexican community in Arizona.